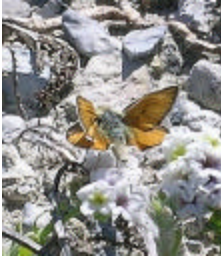


Honey Lake

Carson Wandering Skipper Surveys, Conservation Strategy, and Reports



The **Carson Wandering Skipper** (CWS), a small, tawny orange-colored **butterfly** was listed as an endangered species on August 7, 2002 by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The species is closely associated with its larval host plant, **saltgrass** (*Distichlis spicata*). The adults feed on small flowering plants near the larval host plant, which serve as **nectar sources** in the species wetland **habitat**.

Currently, CWS are relegated to **two** remnant **populations**: one in Washo County, Nevada where **five** individuals were located in 2001 and the other in **Lassen County**, California where **468** individuals were **mapped** this field season.

The CWS is **susceptible** to **extinction** because of its small population size, limited range and restricted habitat. **Threats** to the species include: **habitat destruction, degradation and fragmentation** due to urban and residential **development**, wetland **habitat modification**, water **exportation projects**, road **construction, agricultural/grazing practices**, and non-native **plant invasions**.

Honey Lake Conservation Team biologists conducted the first in a series of five CWS butterfly surveys from June 1–30, 2004. The five surveys are scheduled to occur from 2004 to 2008; the 2004 effort was the most extensive of the **planned surveys**. The survey encompassed **535 acres** at selected CWS habitat areas in the vicinity of Honey Lake. Observations at **55** survey **sites** resulted in the sighting of **468 CWS**.

Of the 468 observed CWS, **27** were scattered across the **North Shore**, **101** on the **Island** (50 of which are concentrated on the northern tip of the Island). Two high-density populations totaling **340 CWS** were observed near the **Wendel-Amedee Hot Springs** area on the eastern shore of the Lake.

Distributions of the CWS host plant, **saltgrass**, and of the two primary **nectar** sources, **salt heliotrope** (*Heliotropium curassavicum*) and **birdfoot trefoil** (*Lotus corniculatus*), were mapped. CWS survey data sheets, site maps and photos were correlated in July and data analysis was completed in August. The draft CWS **Conservation Strategy** will be completed by October 15th and the draft Annual CWS **Survey Report** will be completed by December 31st. The findings and decisions of the CWS conservation strategy will be used in the **Honey Lake Management Plan** to **guide** recommendations relating to **public use** and access.

Honey Lake
Conservation Team

The Center for Urban Wetland Research

Baker



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